

# **THE OFFICE OF EFFICIENCY REVIEW BEST PRACTICES & GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

## **Overview of the “Plain Talk Letter Reform” Initiative**

### **Name of Agency & Director**

Arizona Department of Revenue (ADOR), Director Gale Garriott

### **Background and Summary of Best Practice**

Representatives from ADOR learned that the state of Washington’s Dept. of Revenue was experiencing greater productivity, compliance and response time by reviewing and rewriting many of their form letters. This initiative was undertaken with the advice of a consultant who taught the State of Washington’s managers how to effectively write letters that increased comprehension and increased desired response. The Arizona Department of Revenue (ADOR) partnered with representatives from the State of Washington to take advantage of the training while avoiding the cost of a consultant. ADOR has since redrafted 30 of their letters and have experienced greater agency productivity, compliance and response from the public.

### **Savings & Benefits**

- Increased compliance and response time.
- Less calls into the agency
- Reduction in caller wait times.
- Elimination of unnecessary confusion for the public.
- Decreased need for additional, and sometimes costly, enforcement efforts.

### **Staff involved**

- Public Information Officer
- Selected Managers who have experience with customer service and/or public correspondence.
- Staff Attorney (For compliance purposes at the beginning and end of project).

### **How to begin implementing this idea at your agency**

1. Gather all form letters.
2. Develop a team: Ask your PIO, and any others Managers you feel are necessary to participate. Charge this group with the responsibility of developing succinct, clear, and concise letters, while still maintaining legal compliance.
3. Begin to establish benchmarks and baselines that measure results like 1) the number of phone calls to the phone #'s listed on letters 2) Response times 3) Compliance levels. 4) Need for follow up after sending a letter.
4. Ask your PIO to attend the training to be scheduled at AZGU for February 7<sup>th</sup> from 9-12 at ADOA room 102B. Please have the PIO’s register in advance by:
  - Going to [www.azgu.gov](http://www.azgu.gov)
  - Click “Search for a class”
  - Enter “Plain Talk”
  - Click “Enroll”

### **Contacts who are available to provide assistance**

Joellyn Pollock, Director, AZ Government University  
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**To propose one of your Best Practices please contact Tad Wootton at [twootton@az.gov](mailto:twootton@az.gov) or 602.542.1246**

